Minister concerned of two States on 18.12.2006. No solution acceptable to both States emerged in these meetings.

Further, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu *vide* letter dated 20.12.2007 informed that he had a meeting with Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala in the presence of Hon'ble Union Minister for Water Resources on 19.12.2007 where he suggested to oversee the seepage measurement of the dam by engineers not belonging to either of the two States through CWC and Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala agreed to consider them. Later, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala *vide* letter dated 11.2.2008 addressed to Hon'ble Minister (WR) informed that the suggesion put forward by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to get seepages in the dam examined by the experts has been accepted by the Kerala.

Commercial use of ground water

1234. SHRI N. R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a hunge quantity of ground water is being used for commercial purposes by the soft drink and bottled drinking water companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the water tables are dipping as a result of ground water being drawn by these companies;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Central Ground Water Authority has laid any norms in this regard;

(f) if so, the main features thereof; and

(g) whether these norms are being strictly followed by these companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (g) Major share of ground water utilization in the country is for agricultural purposes. The studies conducted by Central Ground Water Board reveal that the water tables are dipping due to cumulative effect of domestic, agricultural and industrial uses, including withdrawals of ground water by soft drinks and bottled drinking water companies.

The Central Ground Water Authority has issued guidelines for regulation of withdrawal of ground water in over-exploited, critical and semi-critical areas. States have been requested to take steps to implement these guidelines.

Grants under AIBP

†1235. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Government has made a provision for giving thirty per cent grant under Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP);

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.